United Nations A/70/191

General Assembly

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29 July 2015
English
Original: Russian

Seventieth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the seventieth session

Observer status for the International Civil Defence Organization in the General Assembly

Letter dated 29 July 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the seventieth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the International Civil Defence Organization in the General Assembly".

In conformity with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory note (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II) are attached to this letter.

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

15-12934 (E) 040815

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Annex I

Explanatory note

The International Civil Defence Organization is an international organization based in Switzerland.

It is at present the only intergovernmental organization that specializes in civil defence and protection of civilians at the international level. It operates on the basis of its Constitution, an international agreement adopted on 17 October 1966.

Under the Constitution, the Organization's core functions are:

- To promote the development of governmental bodies and mechanisms for the protection of people, property and the environment in the event of natural and man-made disasters.
- To bring together national civil defence services, including search and rescue units, and to develop cooperation, exchanges and coordination among them. The International Civil Defence Organization provides them with technical and advisory support and develops and implements relevant training programmes.

1. Members

Under article 3 of the Constitution, "Membership in the Organization shall be open to all States". Any country that accepts the Constitution may join the Organization. States can also obtain observer status, which entitles them to take part in all activities of the Organization.

The Organization currently has 54 member States. There are 19 countries with observer status. The Organization also has 30 associate members, including some international organizations. The member States, observers and associate members represent all regions of the world.

2. Structure, management and financing

The highest body of the Organization is its General Assembly, which is composed of delegates from member States.

The Executive Council of the Organization is responsible for implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and guiding the work of the Organization.

The Organization has a permanent secretariat that provides administrative and technical support. The secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General elected for a four-year term.

In accordance with article 42 of the Constitution, the expenditures of the Organization are apportioned among the members in accordance with a scale fixed by the Assembly.

3. Aims and activities

The main priorities and spheres of activity of the Organization are reflected in the strategic development programme. An important provision of that programme is improved engagement with the United Nations and other international organizations

on the basis of new forms of cooperation in the area of improving preparedness for the protection of people and the environment.

The Organization has ongoing communication with international partners, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Consultative Group on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets, the Civil-Military Coordination Section, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the secretariat of the Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe, as well as other associate members, in particular the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior.

4. Observer status in the General Assembly of the United Nations

The General Assembly of the United Nations, by its decision 49/426, decided that the granting of observer status should be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

The International Civil Defence Organization is an intergovernmental organization, having been established as such on the basis of its Constitution, a multilateral agreement adopted on 17 October 1966. The Organization is financed by its member States, which are States Members of the United Nations.

The aims of the General Assembly of the United Nations and those of the International Civil Defence Organization with regard to the formulation and implementation of effective measures to protect and ensure human security in the face of today's shifting challenges and threats are complementary. In addition, the promotion, through the United Nations system, of the activities of the International Civil Defence Organization could contribute to the wider dissemination of the latter's expertise and work. Collaboration between the International Civil Defence Organization and relevant United Nations entities on a regular and systematic basis will foster a new image of civil defence.

Granting observer status in the General Assembly to the International Civil Defence Organization would further strengthen mutually beneficial institutional dialogue between that Organization and the United Nations and would expand the capacity of both institutions to promote peace and security and develop effective cooperation in the field of humanitarian response.

Annex II

Draft resolution
Observer status for the International Civil Defence Organization in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the International Civil Defence Organization,

1. *Decides* to invite the International Civil Defence Organization to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary actions to implement the present resolution.

United Nations A/70/192

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the seventieth session

Observer status for the Indian Ocean Rim Association in the General Assembly

Letter dated 6 August 2015 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I, as Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association, have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the seventieth session of the Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the Indian Ocean Rim Association in the General Assembly".

The Association is an intergovernmental organization consisting of 20 littoral and island States around the Indian Ocean.

The Association wishes to apply for observer status with the General Assembly to extend and formalize ties with the United Nations, thus enabling greater interaction and collaboration with the United Nations on shared matters of interest.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I attach an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Julie **Bishop**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia

15-13485 (E) 140815

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Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

1. The Indian Ocean Rim Association fulfils the legal criteria for permanent observer status in the General Assembly

In its decision 49/426, adopted without a vote, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee and taking note of the oral report presented to the Sixth Committee on 25 November 1994 by the Chair of the Working Group on the question of criteria for granting observer status in the Assembly, decided that the granting of observer status in the Assembly should in future be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an independent intergovernmental organization established in March 1997 by the agreement establishing the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation[1] (IORA Charter). The organization has its headquarters in Ebène, Mauritius.

Created as a vehicle for fostering economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, the Association has evolved into the peak regional grouping to span the Indian Ocean. The objectives of the Association — enshrined in the Charter — are:

(a) To promote the sustained growth and balanced development of the region and of the Member States, and to create common ground for regional economic cooperation;

(b) To focus on those areas of economic cooperation which provide maximum opportunities to develop shared interests and reap mutual benefits. Towards this end, to formulate and implement projects for economic cooperation relating to trade facilitation and liberalization, promotion of foreign investment, scientific and technological exchanges, tourism, movement of natural persons and service providers on a non-discriminatory basis; and the development of infrastructure and human resources, inter alia, poverty alleviation, promotion of maritime transport and related matters, cooperation in the fields of fisheries trade, research and management, aquaculture, education and training, energy, information technology, health, protection of the environment, agriculture, and disaster management;

(c) To seek to invigorate the Association by advancing the prioritized agenda decided upon at the meeting of the Council of Ministers held in Bengaluru, India, in November 2011. That meeting gave a focused direction to the formulation of a dynamic road map of cooperation, in consonance with the growing global emphasis on the unique geo-strategic primacy of the Indian Ocean rim. The priority areas are (i) maritime safety and security; (ii) trade and investment facilitation; (iii) fisheries management; (iv) disaster risk management; (v) academic and science and technology cooperation; and (vi) tourism and cultural exchanges;

[1] The organization's name was formally changed from the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation to the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in 2014. This name change was confirmed by agreement to a revised Charter adopted on 9 October 2014 at the 13th meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

(d) To explore all possibilities and avenues for trade liberalization, to remove impediments and lower barriers to freer and enhanced flow of goods, services, investment and technology within the region;

(e) To encourage close interaction of trade and industry, academic institutions, scholars and the peoples of the member States without any discrimination among member States and without prejudice to obligations under other regional economic and trade cooperation arrangements;

(f) To strengthen cooperation and dialogue among member States in international forums on global economic issues, and where desirable to develop shared strategies and take common positions in the international forums on issues of mutual interest;

(g) To promote cooperation in the development of human resources, particularly through closer linkages among training institutions, universities and other specialized institutions of the member States.

2. Membership

From its inception in 1997 with 14 member States, the Association's membership has expanded to 20 countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen.

The Association has six dialogue partners. China, Egypt, France, Japan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

The Association has two observers: the Indian Ocean Tourism Organisation and the Indian Ocean Research Group.

The organization is financed by annual contributions from its member States, together with funding by member States for the Special Fund, which supports specific projects and programmes adopted by the Association. Member States in addition provide in-kind support for various activities, such as hosting conferences, meetings and workshops, undertaking research, feasibility studies and assessments, and enabling networking opportunities and cooperation among member States within specific sectors.

3. Institutions and structure

The Association is composed of a Secretariat, a Council of Ministers, a Committee of Senior Officials, four working groups and two specialized agencies.

The ultimate decision-making body of the organization is the Council of Ministers, a forum in which Foreign Ministers meet annually to advance areas of regional cooperation. The Council of Ministers forms policy, reviews progress, agrees new areas for cooperation, establishes additional mechanisms or specialized agencies as necessary, and makes decisions on other matters of shared interest. The Council of Ministers elects a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Association for a period of two years respectively. The Council of Ministers is the sole body within the Association with the power to decide on applications for membership of the organization.

The Committee of Senior Officials, a group of senior government officials of member States, meets twice a year to decide on the Association's work programme and to further implementation of decisions taken at the Council of Ministers. The Committee of Senior Officials, with the four working groups, establishes the priorities for economic cooperation, develops, monitors and coordinates the programmes of work, mobilizes funding to finance programmes of work, submits periodic reports to the Council of Ministers, and refers policy matters requiring decisions to the Council of Ministers.

The Secretariat is the executive organ of the organization and is responsible for carrying out the Association's programme of work from day to day. It is headed by a Secretary-General, who is appointed by the Council of Ministers. The Secretary-General is assisted by up to four directors and supporting staff. The Secretariat is based in Ebène, Mauritius, and operates in English.

The Association comprises four working groups: the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum, the Working Group on Trade and Investment, the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group, and the Working Group of Heads of Mission. These groups, coordinated by the Secretariat, carry out the activities underpinning the Association's programme of work. The working groups report to the Committee of Senior Officials.

The Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum was established to encourage the participation of the private sector in advancing the agenda for economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, in particular by bringing together representatives from business and the chambers of commerce of Member States. This forum facilitates closer interaction between the business, government and academic sectors.

The purpose of the Working Group on Trade and Investment is to improve regional cooperation on trade and investment facilitation, including through the development of workshops and sharing of best practice.

The Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group was established to further intellectual dialogue between participating member States, to serve as a vehicle for promoting Indian Ocean regionalism, and to provide coordinated research on the Indian Ocean region.

The Working Group of Heads of Mission consists of the heads of diplomatic missions of the Association's member States based in Pretoria. The Working Group meets annually and acts as a follow-up mechanism on issues directly referred by the Committee of Senior Officials and the Council of Ministers. The purpose of this group is to allow the Association's member States to meet intersessionally between other formal meetings. There is no specific sectoral focus for this group.

The Association has two specialized agencies, the Fisheries Support Unit and the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology. The Fisheries Support Unit is hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, and aims to improve regional cooperation on fisheries-related activities through more effective networking and coordination among member States. The Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology is hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and aims to assist Member States to acquire, disseminate and promote technologies, undertake research, policy review and analysis, facilitate networking and partnerships with international organizations and other key stakeholders and encourage the establishment of technology hubs to jointly advance technology development.

4. Mutual advantages of the Association being granted observer status in the General Assembly

The various activities of the organization advance in a practical manner many of the objectives and purposes of the United Nations, with a particular focus on those that relate to sustainable economic growth — including trade and investment, the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, maritime security, safety — including disaster risk management, food security — particularly around fisheries management, and gender equality.

While these focal areas affirm and further key priorities of the United Nations, they are also central to the post-2015 development agenda. The Association's work aligns strongly with a number of the proposed sustainable development goals to be discussed ahead of the seventieth session of the General Assembly — not least those associated with sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the sustainable use of the oceans and gender equality.

The Association has an important role to play in ensuring the security, prosperity and stability of the Indian Ocean region. As the only ministerial-level forum to span the Indian Ocean, the Association is in a strong position to convey and promote the positions of the Indian Ocean region in international forums, while also shaping the region's response to the post-2015 agenda and the broader concerns of the General Assembly.

The Indian Ocean region is important for the United Nations. The Association's role in coordinating and implementing regional responses to United Nations priorities is significant. Indian Ocean rim countries are home to more than 30 per cent of the world's population — about 2 billion people. The Indian Ocean region includes some of the fastest growing economies, driven by large and youthful populations, and huge reserves of natural resources. The world relies on the sea lines of communication that cross the Indian Ocean.

In its programme of work for coming years, the Association remains focused on furthering regional economic cooperation among member States and ensuring that the challenges faced by the countries of the Indian Ocean rim are sufficiently considered in international discourse.

For these reasons, an increased exchange with the General Assembly would be mutually beneficial.

Numerous United Nations agencies and bodies — including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Intergovernmental Oceanic Commission, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme — have participated in the activities of the Association. We also envisage opportunities for cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Maritime Organization, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the World Tourism Organization.

In view of the degree of cooperation that already exists between the Association and the United Nations agencies and bodies, and taking into account the Association's broad mandate in the Indian Ocean region, observer status in the General Assembly would both consolidate links between the United Nations and the Association, and facilitate opportunities for greater mutually beneficial cooperation in the future.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Indian Ocean Rim Association in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Indian Ocean Rim Association,

1. *Decides* to invite the Indian Ocean Rim Association to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the action necessary to implement the present resolution.

United Nations A/70/193

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 August 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the seventieth session

Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants in the Mediterranean basin with specific emphasis on Syrian asylum seekers

Letter dated 14 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion of a supplementary item, entitled "Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants in the Mediterranean basin with specific emphasis on Syrian asylum seekers", in the agenda of the seventieth session of the Assembly, to be considered in plenary meeting.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum is annexed to the present letter.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative of Turkey
to the United Nations

15-13854 (E) 200815

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Annex

Explanatory memorandum

States bordering the Mediterranean basin are faced with increasing movements of migrants. Many of the irregular migrants are victims of migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Thousands of them are seeking to escape conflict. Hundreds have lost their lives during perilous journeys. Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants and asylum seekers in the Mediterranean basin is therefore needed.

The dramatic situation in the Mediterranean basin is affecting countries in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, West Africa and East and the Horn of Africa in different ways and requires a collective and comprehensive response based on principles of humanity, respect for human rights, access to asylum and protection, solidarity and burden-sharing.

Regionally, countries around the Mediterranean are source, transit and destination States. This very complex situation can be addressed only through a global approach based on partnerships among stakeholders.

Globally, the displacement of millions of people in the countries sharing the Mediterranean basin has aggravated the challenges faced by the international community beyond the immediate borders of the region. Dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean claim a significant number of lives. The movement of masses who have not had access to high-quality health care for years exposes the global health system to future risks. The disruption and lack of education for millions of displaced children deprive them of a future and make them potential targets for violent extremist groups.

At this point, Syrian asylum seekers deserve special attention. After more than four years of conflict and suffering, the Syrian crisis is the world's largest humanitarian tragedy. Almost half of the country's population, close to 12 million men, women and children, has been displaced. According to the latest United Nations figures, more than 4 million people have fled to neighbouring countries and North Africa. Projections by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees indicate a continued outpouring of refugees to neighbouring countries and beyond, with an uncertain timetable for their return.

The neighbours of Syria — Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq — and other countries in the region have been bearing the brunt of the crisis since its very beginning. It is neither possible nor just to expect those neighbours, or other countries in the region that host large numbers of displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees, to face the migratory pressures and the risks and threats alone.

Unless the root causes of migratory flows, such as political, economic and social instability and conflicts, are addressed by the international community, this already-bleak situation is bound to deteriorate. The collective interest of humanity is in addressing the complex set of issues caused by the tragedies of irregular migrants and Syrian asylum seekers in the Mediterranean basin.

Such an effort will require the engagement of the international community for broader cooperation. Long-term commitment is necessary across a wide range of policy areas.

Consideration of this agenda item would enable the international community to discuss, within the United Nations, potential viable responses and solutions with regard to irregular migrants in the Mediterranean basin through pragmatic partnerships between countries of origin, destination and transit. Such a discussion is needed to address the immediate humanitarian needs of migrants and to foster regional stability.

United Nations A/70/194

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 August 2015

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Seventieth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the seventieth session

Observer status for the International Conference of Asian Political Parties in the General Assembly

Letter dated 11 August 2015 from the representatives of Australia, Cambodia, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We, the undersigned, have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the seventieth session of the General Assembly a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the International Conference of Asian Political Parties in the General Assembly".

The International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) was launched in Manila, the Philippines, in September 2000 to build bridges of political cooperation and to establish networks of mutual benefit among mainstream political parties in Asia, both ruling and in opposition. Over its first decade, ICAPP has grown steadily in both membership and influence. As of June 2015, ICAPP's membership has reached more than 360 eligible political parties in 52 States and 1 territory in Asia. After establishing fraternal linkages and cooperation with the Permanent Conference of Political Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL) in 2008, ICAPP has also been undertaking efforts to reach out to the political parties in other continents, and successfully helped political parties in Africa establish the Council of African Political Parties (CAPP) in 2013.

So far, ICAPP has held eight General Assemblies: in Manila (2000), Bangkok (2002), Beijing (2004), Seoul (2006), Astana (2009), Phnom Penh (2010), Baku (2012) and Colombo (2014). These Assemblies have brought together the Asian continent's most prominent political leaders to search for ways of coexisting in a more peaceful, more democratic and more prosperous Asia. Its Standing Committee, made up of 35 leading political parties in 23 States, has met at least twice a year since 2004.

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ICAPP has also organized special conferences on key continental issues since 2008, such as those of minimizing political corruption (Seoul, 2008), strengthening state capacity (Kathmandu, 2009), easing mass poverty (Kunming, 2010), dealing with natural disasters (Kuala Lumpur, 2011), enhancing people's access to benefits of development (Nanning, 2011), promoting green development (Xi'an, 2013), promoting women's leadership (Seoul, 2013) and promoting regional economic cooperation (Vladivostok, 2015).

From its inception, ICAPP has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations and its activities. The first paragraph of the preamble of the ICAPP Charter, adopted in September 2006, declares the unequivocal commitment of ICAPP to the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. Representatives of the political parties that took part in the 6th General Assembly of ICAPP, in Phnom Penh in 2010, unanimously adopted a declaration endorsing the bid for observer status for ICAPP in the United Nations General Assembly. ICAPP is also coordinating with the Governments of other United Nations Member States in joint initiatives towards the same objective.

We believe that ICAPP can play a major role in forging cooperation between the United Nations and the political parties of Asia and those of Latin America and Africa in the future, the three continents of the emerging democracies, by aggregating and channelling to the United Nations system the views of the peoples in all their diversity, as expressed in political debates and discussions at all dimensions, local, national and continental, promoting people's awareness, approval and support of international agreements reached at the United Nations, and building international consensus on United Nations action to meet key global challenges. In addition, ICAPP can provide support for political parties in the emerging democracies and increase their capacity to carry out at local and national levels their law-making and oversight functions on matters subject to international cooperation at the United Nations.

Attached are a draft explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution regarding inviting ICAPP to participate in the sessions and work of the United Nations General Assembly (annex II).

We have the honour to request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Caitlin **Wilson**
Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia
to the United Nations
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

(*Signed*) Tuy **Ry**
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Yoshifumi **Okamura**
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan
to the United Nations
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

(*Signed*) Durga Prasad **Bhattarai**
Permanent Representative of
the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Lourdes O. **Yparraguirre**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Oh **Joon**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Rohan **Perera**
Permanent Representative of the
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
to the United Nations

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

Historical background

The International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) was launched by the leaders of 46 political parties of Asia in Manila in September 2000, to build bridges of political cooperation and to establish networks of mutual benefit among mainstream political parties in Asia, both ruling and in opposition. Since its inception, ICAPP has grown steadily in both membership and influence. As of the end of June 2015, the membership of ICAPP has reached more than 360 eligible political parties in 52 States and 1 territory in Asia.

So far, eight General Assemblies of ICAPP have been successfully held: in Manila in 2000, Bangkok in 2002, Beijing in 2004, Seoul in 2006, Astana in 2009, Phnom Penh in 2010, Baku in 2012 and Colombo in 2014, and they have brought together political leaders in the region to exchange opinions and communicate with each other and have helped strengthen unity among Asian States and propel Asia along the road towards stability and prosperity. The 9th ICAPP General Assembly will be held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2016.

The ICAPP Standing Committee, made up of 35 leading political parties in 23 States, has met at least twice a year since 2004. ICAPP has also been annually organizing special conferences on key continental issues since May 2008, such as those of minimizing political corruption (Seoul, 2008), strengthening state capacity (Kathmandu, 2009), easing mass poverty (Kunming, 2010), dealing with natural disasters (Kuala Lumpur, 2011), enhancing people's access to benefits of development (Nanning, 2011), promoting green development (Xi'an, 2013), promoting women's leadership (Seoul, 2013) and promoting regional economic cooperation (Vladivostok, 2015). Another special conference, on rebuilding the Silk Road, will be held in Beijing in October 2015.

Purpose

Article 1 of the ICAPP Charter, adopted at the 4th General Assembly, in September 2006, stipulates the objectives of ICAPP as follows:

(a) To promote exchanges and cooperation between political parties with various ideologies in Asia;

(b) To enhance mutual understanding and trust among the peoples and countries in the region;

(c) To promote regional cooperation through the unique role and channel of political parties; and

(d) To create an environment for sustained peace and shared prosperity in the region.

Organizational structure

Membership

Article 2 of the ICAPP Charter stipulates that the ICAPP "shall be open to all political parties in Asia with democratically elected members in the parliaments of their respective countries, which are Member States of the United Nations". It was agreed to extend an invitation to political parties in the Palestinian National Authority in an effort to render ICAPP activities more inclusive and representative of the diversities existing in the region, at the 5th Meeting of the Standing Committee, in June 2006.

At the 8th Meeting of the Standing Committee, in November 2008, it was further agreed to apply two criteria to political parties in Asia to be eligible for invitation to future ICAPP activities: (1) political parties which have more than 1 per cent of elected seats in their parliaments, or (2) political parties which have won more than 1 per cent of popular votes in their latest parliamentary elections, as certified and recognized by their national election commissions.

According to these criteria, there are more than 360 political parties in 52 States and 1 territory in Asia that are eligible to participate in ICAPP activities as of the end of June 2015.

General Assembly

According to Article 4 of the ICAPP Charter, a General Assembly is held once every two years on a rotational basis among its members, unless otherwise decided by the Standing Committee. And, in principle, the Assembly is held for three working days during the latter half of the year and is composed of an opening session, a plenary session and thematic committee meetings, special workshops on specific topics as approved by the Standing Committee and a closing session.

Standing Committee

According to Articles 9 and 10 of the ICAPP Charter, a Standing Committee, composed of the representatives of principal political parties of 23 countries in Asia, was established. The membership may be shared by up to two principal political parties from each country. Currently, the Standing Committee is composed of the representatives of the 35 leading political parties from 23 States representing different subregions of Asia, i.e. Central Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia and Oceania.

The Members of the Standing Committee serve for two years from the end of a General Assembly until the end of the following General Assembly. The Standing Committee makes decisions and lays out the procedures on issues regarding the organization of ICAPP meetings, including the General Assemblies and special conferences, as well as other issues regarding other ICAPP activities and programmes.

Since 2004, the Standing Committee has been meeting more than twice a year.

Secretariat

The Permanent Secretariat of ICAPP was established in Seoul, Republic of Korea, by a decision unanimously taken at the 10th Meeting of the Standing

Committee, in March 2009, and endorsed at the 5th General Assembly, in September 2009.

In accordance with Article 12 of the ICAPP Charter, the Secretariat executes such functions, among others, as (1) to maintain and update the list of political parties and the official website, (2) to provide necessary information and assistance to ICAPP members, and (3) to establish contacts and promote cooperation with other international or regional organizations.

Financing

Article 8 of the ICAPP Charter stipulates that the political parties hosting the General Assembly, shall bear the primary expenses of the General Assemblies. The primary expenses include logistical arrangements for the General Assembly, i.e. conference facilities, domestic transportation, etc. The primary expenses shall not include, inter alia, international transportation to and from the location of the General Assembly. For the purposes of holding the General Assembly, the political parties hosting the General Assemblies, may seek voluntary contributions from members of ICAPP and other organizations.

ICAPP activities, i.e. General Assemblies, Standing Committee Meetings and Special Conferences, are funded in principle by the political parties that host such events, which usually cover the costs of organizing conferences and minimum local accommodation for a limited number of representatives of political parties participating in the events.

At the 10th Meeting of the Standing Committee, in March 2009, it was agreed that the budget and personnel to implement the functions of the ICAPP Secretariat shall be initially provided by the host country. It was further agreed that the Standing Committee will continue to discuss issues relating to budget and personnel of the Secretariat. Since 2010, the Korea Foundation in Seoul has provided funding to support a part of the Secretariat activities. Other administrative budget items, including office maintenance and personnel costs, are covered by private donations.

Activities

General Assemblies

So far, eight ICAPP General Assemblies (GA) have been held. The 1st GA was held in Manila in September 2000 with representatives of 46 political parties from 26 countries, the 2nd GA in Bangkok in November 2002 with 77 parties from 35 countries, the 3rd GA in Beijing in September 2004 with 81 parties from 35 countries, the 4th GA in Seoul in September 2006 with 92 parties from 36 countries, the 5th GA in Astana in September 2009 with 63 parties from 33 countries, the 6th GA in Phnom Penh in December 2010 with 90 parties from 36 countries, the 7th GA in Baku in November 2012 with 60 parties from 30 countries, and the 8th GA in Colombo in September 2014 with 64 parties from 29 countries.

These Assemblies have brought together the Asian continent's most prominent political leaders to search for ways of coexisting in a more peaceful, more democratic and more prosperous Asia.

The 9th General Assembly is scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2016.

Special conferences

Special conferences and workshops have also been convened for ICAPP members on key challenges we are facing in the region, such as minimizing political corruption (Seoul, 2008), strengthening state capacity (Kathmandu, 2009), easing mass poverty (Kunming, 2010), dealing with natural disasters (Kuala Lumpur, 2011), enhancing people's access to benefits of development (Nanning, 2011), promoting green development (Xi'an, 2013), promoting women's leadership (Seoul, 2013) and promoting regional economic cooperation (Vladivostok, 2015).

In addition, two separate workshops on human trafficking have been held in Kathmandu in January 2014 and in Phnom Penh in April 2015.

ICAPP is preparing to host another special conference, on rebuilding the Silk Road and connecting the East and West, in Beijing in October 2015.

Relations with other organizations

Recently, ICAPP has been trying to reach out to other regions in the world. The first joint session was successfully held in Buenos Aires in July 2009 with COPPPAL, the Permanent Conference of Political Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean. And, after establishing fraternal linkages and cooperation with COPPPAL, ICAPP has been undertaking efforts to reach out to the political parties in Africa, and successfully helped political parties in Africa establish the Council of African Political Parties (CAPP) in April 2013. In this regard, ICAPP is planning to convene the first trilateral meeting of representatives of ICAPP, COPPPAL and CAPP in Jakarta in April 2016.

In addition, the ICAPP Standing Committee has recently decided to establish regular dialogue with various groups of political parties in Europe.

ICAPP will continue to play a key role not only in Asia's inevitable movement to build an Asian community, but also in the global quest for a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Issues relating to the character of ICAPP

Although ICAPP is not an intergovernmental organization per se, the following points with regard to its legal status should be well taken into consideration by the United Nations Member States:

(a) **ICAPP is unique in nature in that it is open to all political parties regardless of their political orientation**;

(b) **The political parties participating in ICAPP activities are either responsible for forming the governments in their respective countries and making the most of their policies**, or eligible to form future governments depending on the results of elections;

(c) **ICAPP has also been channelling to the United Nations system the results of their political debates at all levels, local, national and continental**, like submitting the Kunming Declaration on Poverty Alleviation, which had been

adopted at the special ICAPP conference in Kunming in July 2010, in time for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals summit held two months later;

(d) In addition, in recent years, **ICAPP has been in close cooperation with political parties in other regions, i.e. Latin America and Africa, with a view to form a global forum of political parties,** and, in the case of Latin America, ICAPP and COPPPAL have been holding annual joint sessions to coordinate their activities to promote United Nations objectives.

Intergovernmental memorandum of understanding on cooperation to support ICAPP activities

In recognition of ICAPP's role in bringing together all political parties to promote understanding and friendship among countries not only in Asia but also in Latin America and Africa, Governments of several countries in the region concluded an intergovernmental memorandum of understanding (MOU) to provide support for the activities of ICAPP in July 2013. So far, the Governments of Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam have signed the MOU.

Now, many more Governments, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Turkey, are in the process of completing their domestic procedures to sign the MOU.

Reasons for seeking observer status for ICAPP

From its inception, ICAPP has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations and its activities. The first paragraph of the preamble of the ICAPP Charter, adopted in September 2006, declares ICAPP's unequivocal commitment to the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. Representatives of the political parties that took part in ICAPP's 6th General Assembly, in Phnom Penh in December 2010, unanimously adopted a declaration that endorsed ICAPP's bid for observer status in the United Nations General Assembly.

ICAPP will play a key and continuing role not only in Asia's inevitable movement to build an Asian community, but also in the global quest for a more peaceful and prosperous world.

ICAPP can also play a major role in forging cooperation between the United Nations and the political parties not only of Asia but also of Latin America and Africa, the three continents of the emerging democracies, in the following areas:

(a) Aggregating and channelling to the United Nations system the views of our peoples in all their diversity, as expressed in political debates and discussions at all dimensions, local, national and continental;

(b) Promoting ordinary people's awareness, approval and support of international agreements reached at the United Nations and through United Nations programmes;

(c) Building international consensus on United Nations action to meet key global challenges; and

(d) Providing support for political parties in the emerging democracies, to increase their capacity to carry out at local and national levels their law-making and

oversight functions on matters subject to international cooperation at the United Nations.

In addition, the United Nations Secretary-General has been sending his video messages to all major programmes of ICAPP, including the opening sessions of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th General Assemblies of ICAPP, held in Astana, Phnom Penh, Baku and Colombo, and the ICAPP Special Conference on Poverty Alleviation, held in Kunming, and provided valuable contributions and guidance to the deliberations on the main themes of the conferences.

More detailed information on ICAPP can be found on its website at www.theicapp.org.

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Officers of the organization

Mr. Jose de Venecia, Jr., Founding Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Standing Committee of ICAPP, and Former Speaker of the House of Representatives and Co-Founder of the LAKAS-CMD Party, Philippines

Mr. Chung Eui-yong, Co-Chairman of the Standing Committee and Secretary General of ICAPP, and Former Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Democratic Party, Republic of Korea

Mr. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Special Rapporteur of the Standing Committee of ICAPP, and Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League-Q, Pakistan

Other members of the ICAPP Standing Committee

Mr. Shane L. Stone, Former Federal President of the Liberal Party, Australia

Mr. Ahamdov Ali Javad, Deputy Chairman and Executive Secretary of the New Azerbaijan Party, Azerbaijan

Mr. Salah Ali Abdulrahman, Chairman of the Advisory Body of the Islamic National Menbar Society, Bahrain

Mr. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Member of the Standing Committee of the Cambodian People's Party, Cambodia

Mr. Ai Ping, Vice Minister of the International Department, Central Committee of the Communist Party, China

Mr. Karan Singh, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Indian National Congress, India

Mr. Hossein Kashefi Vahdati, President of Iran Parties House, Iran

Mr. Theo L. Sambuaga, Vice President of the GOLKAR Party, Indonesia

Ms. Chinami Nishimura, Member of the Diet and Director General of the Democratic Party, Japan

Mr. Nurlan Nigmatulin, First Deputy Chairman of "Nur Otan" People's Democratic Party, Kazakhstan

Mr. Hwang hin-ha, Member of the National Assembly and Vice Chairman of the Policy Committee of the Grand National Party, Republic of Korea

Mr. Dato Seri Shahidan bin Kassim, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister for the Northern Region Economic Growth, United Malays National Organization, Malaysia

Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Head of the International Department of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), Nepal

Mr. Konstantin Kosachev, Chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the State Duma and Deputy Secretary for International Policy and Interparty Relations of the Presidium of the General Council of the United Russia Party, Russia

Mr. Abdulkadir Emin Onen, Member of the Parliament and Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Justice and Development Party, Turkey

Mr. Vuong Thua Phong, Vice Chairman of the Commission for External Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Viet Nam

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the International Conference of Asian Political Parties

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the International Conference of Asian Political Parties,

1. *Decides* to invite the International Conference of Asian Political Parties to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.